

## **PROPOSED COUVERDON BOUNDARY EXTENSION Q & A**

Council has received an application to extend the Town's boundaries by taking in about 700 acres of lands owned by TimberWest/Couverdon. These lands lie immediately to the west of our community. The Town is following a process laid out by the Provincial government for boundary extensions, which includes getting the approval of Ladysmith voters. Here are answers to some of the most frequently asked questions about the boundary extension.

### **Who is Couverdon?**

Couverdon is the real estate arm of forest company TimberWest. TimberWest is a private corporation owned by two Canadian pension funds. TimberWest owns lands throughout Vancouver Island stretching from Sooke in the south to Campbell River in the north.

### **Why would the Town want to extend its boundaries?**

Council did not seek to expand the Town's boundaries. A property owner adjacent to municipal boundaries has the right to request that they be included within municipal boundaries. Couverdon approached Council and asked if we would be interested in expanding our boundaries because they wanted to be able to develop some of their lands and to provide services to those lands.

Council agreed to consider the boundary extension application because it provides an opportunity for greater protection of the watersheds that provide drinking water to Saltair, Ladysmith, Diamond, and IR12, and greater protection of the views of the forested hills behind Ladysmith. Council has also required as a condition of such a boundary expansion that any future development of the lands, to be included within the Town boundary, would follow smart growth practices and support our sustainability vision.

### **How does this process protect watersheds and views?**

Most of our watersheds are within private managed forest lands owned in part by TimberWest. TimberWest also owns some of the forested hills behind Ladysmith. TimberWest/Couverdon has agreed in principle to sell to the Town approximately 500 acres of lands around Stocking Lake and Holland Lake to help protect our drinking water supply. They have also agreed to not pursue any active forestry on the above noted lands, nor sell the lands to another party as a condition of this process. These lands are in addition to the boundary extension lands and will remain in Cowichan Valley Regional District Area G (Saltair). The Town believes that these lands are important to the health of the two lakes (see the Boundary Extension Application at [www.ladysmith.ca](http://www.ladysmith.ca) for more details).

TimberWest has also made a commitment to the Town to manage their other lands which we can see behind Ladysmith (primarily Stanton Peak) in a way that we will continue to enjoy our views.

### **Will development start as soon as the new property becomes part of the Town of Ladysmith?**

No. There would be a lengthy rezoning process involved. If Ladysmith voters and the Provincial government approve the boundary extension application, these lands would keep their existing forestry zoning. In order to develop them, Couverdon will need to apply to the Town for rezoning, in the same way any other developer has to do. Couverdon has said the development will include residential, commercial, institutional and parkland components and will work closely with the Town to make sure

the development meets our community's sustainability goals and vision. It's also important to remember that the development of the entire parcel will take a number of decades.

**Will this boundary extension force the Sportsmen's fish hatchery on Bush Creek to close down?**

The hatchery site is not part of the boundary expansion area. Couverdon has informed Council that there is no intention to relocate or close the hatchery. There has always been a very good working relationship between TimberWest and the hatchery – that will continue.

**Are developers lined up already?**

No. At present, Couverdon plans to maintain ownership of the lands through the rezoning process and to work with developers once the lands are zoned for development.

**How much development does the Town anticipate taking place on the Couverdon lands?**

Couverdon's plans to date include a variety of residential units, including single- and multi-family, as well as commercial and institutional development. Any development will also include community amenities such as parks and open spaces. Couverdon has said they are looking at approximately 1,500 homes (up to 3,500 people) over the next 30-plus years. You can see Couverdon's proposed Land Use Plan in their Boundary Extension Application on the Town's website [www.ladysmith.ca](http://www.ladysmith.ca) and Couverdon's site [www.ladysmithopenhouse.ca](http://www.ladysmithopenhouse.ca).

**What effect would this boundary expansion and development have on the Town's water supply in these times of climate change?**

Water studies completed between 1995 & 2008 indicate our sources of potable water, Stocking Lake and Holland Lake/Creek, with water system improvements such as universal water metering, raising Holland Lake Dam 1 metre etc., can serve approximately 18,000 people in Ladysmith/Diamond/IR12 (approximately 9,000 today) and 3000 people in Saltair (2000 today). Studies are underway this year to reconfirm the capacity of the area's water supply in the face of climate change. Any rezoning and development approvals on the new lands will be dependent on proven adequate capacity of our water supply system.

**What about the cost to build roads and provide services to the new developments?**

The developer will be responsible for providing all new infrastructure including roads as well as water and sewer connections. Furthermore, all new development contributes Development Cost Charges to support future infrastructure construction that services the whole community such as major roads, sewer and water system upgrades, storm water management, and parks and recreation facilities.

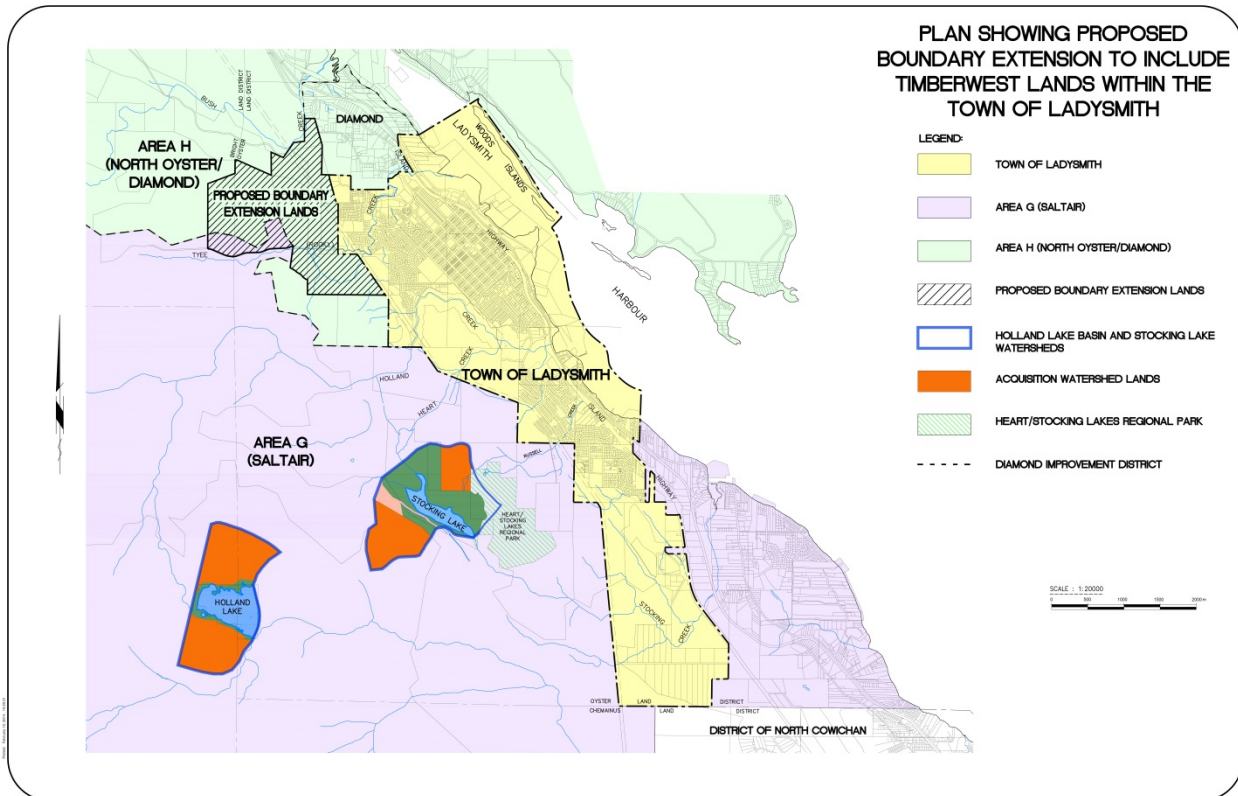
**Why did Council not use a referendum for public approval?**

Any boundary extension must follow Provincial regulations, which, since 2008, require the approval of the municipality's voters. The legislation allows for two different types of approval – the alternative approval process we are using, or a referendum. The alternative approval process is far less costly. If more than 10 per cent of eligible voters submit an Elector Response Form by March 14, the AAP does not pass. Council will then decide whether to put the question to a referendum in which all eligible Ladysmith voters would have the opportunity to vote for or against the boundary extension. Council has

not yet discussed a possible referendum date. If the AAP does get the approval of voters, the application will go to the Provincial government for review and possible approval.

### How can I get more information?

The Couverdon Boundary Extension Application and a number of supporting documents are available on the Town's website [www.ladysmith.ca](http://www.ladysmith.ca), and on Couverdon's site [www.ladysmithopenhouse.ca](http://www.ladysmithopenhouse.ca). You can also e-mail members of Council at [towncouncil@ladysmith.ca](mailto:towncouncil@ladysmith.ca), or call City Hall at 250.245.6400.



Rob Hutchins, Mayor

[rhutchins@ladysmith.ca](mailto:rhutchins@ladysmith.ca)